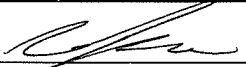

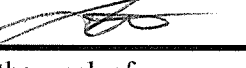


## TMA-REPORT

Technical &amp; Regulatory affairs, Washington, D.C.

To: DOCUMENTATION CENTER OF TMC TECHNICAL ADMINISTRATION DIV.

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TITLE	Safety News Articles For The Week of April 13-17, 2009	Originated: M. Hoffman	
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		Approved: C. Tinto	

Following is a summary of the articles from major news outlets pertaining to safety issues for the week of April 13<sup>th</sup>. The articles are attached:

Summary

REDACTED - RELEVANCY

Attachments: Safety News Articles

“Toyota: Unintended Acceleration or Sticky Floor Mats?” Article 3 *Truth About Cars* (April 13, 2009):

- A year ago, TTAC published a story about out-of-control Tacomas, and reports continue to surface of “unintended acceleration” events in Lexus ES and IS and Toyota Camry and Camry Solara vehicles.
- Toyota insists that all-weather floor mats are the problem; the accelerator becomes stuck under the rubber.
- Toyota argues that if there was a problem, the computer that manages the vehicle’s speed would detect a difference between the accelerator and throttle positions and cause the engine to reduce power.
- In their investigations, they claim that no such errors were detected by the computer.
- NHTSA is satisfied with Toyota’s explanation, but cite a lack of resources to investigate the matter any further.
- Toyota’s solution to the sticky floor mat: a few clips to attach it to the carpet and an orange sticker to stick on the back warning of the problem.

REDACTED - RELEVANCY











## The Truth About Cars

Car Reviews, Auto News, Editorials and Podcasts

### Toyota: Unintended Acceleration or Sticky Floor Mats?

By Jeff Puthuff  
April 11, 2009



A year ago, TTAC published a story about out-of-control Toyota Tacomas. Since then, reports continue to surface of "unintended acceleration" events in Lexus ES and IS and Toyota Camry and Camry Solara [vehicles](#). Toyota insists that all-weather floor mats are causing the problem; the accelerator becomes stuck under the rubber. Autocoverup.com alleges, well, you know. "This is a known problem with over 432 complaints," the site's author insists. According to NHTSA's Defect Investigation's database, reports of unintended acceleration in Lexus ES models first surfaced around 2004 and continued until late 2008. One report (ODI-NHTSA Complaint Number 10252860) describes the problem:

On November 5, 2008, I was driving on a freeway in my 2008 Lexus ES350 with the cruise control on. I gave the car a little extra gas to pass another car and the car just took off. I tried to disengage the accelerator by trying to turn off the cruise control switch as well as tapping on the brake pedal, but it would not disengage. I tried to turn off the engine by pushing the keyless ignition button, but it would not turn off. I checked the floor to make sure that there wasn't anything on the accelerator, and there wasn't. I then put the car in neutral, but when I did this, the engine sounded as if it were going to explode, so I put it back in gear. By this



time, I was going well over 100 mph. My only choice was to stand on the brakes. Within seconds, the car was in a cloud of smoke coming from the 4 wheels/brakes. The car began to slow as thankfully the brakes were stronger than the engine which was going at its maximum rpm's. The car went over a mile before finally coming to a stop. I was then able to put the car in park and stop the engine. After a few moments, when I had calmed down a bit, I started the engine again and it immediately start racing at maximum rpm's again, so I shut it off . . .

Another report notes that an out of control vehicle traveled eight miles at more than 100 mph before striking two vehicles and becoming disabled. A person in one of the struck vehicles was killed in the collision.

It seems unlikely that a simple piece of rubber could cause so much terror, personal injuries, and, in one case, death. Why has Toyota not recalled the mats that are optional items sold by their dealers? (That's right. These are OEM mats, not aftermarket items.)

Autocoverup.com hosts a recorded conversation between an affected owner and a technician. The technician experienced the same acceleration problem when picking up the vehicle and driving it to the service center. His later explanation sounds scripted.

Toyota argues that if there was a problem, the computer that manages the vehicle's speed would detect a difference between the accelerator and throttle positions and cause the engine to reduce power. In their investigations, they claim that no such errors were detected by the computer.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is satisfied with Toyota's explanation, although, worryingly, they cite a lack of resources to investigate the matter any further.

Toyota's solution to the sticky floormat: a few clips to attach it to the carpet and an orange sticker to stick on the back warning of the problem. But what about the cruise controls that refuse to disengage?

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[REDACTED]





REDACTED - RELEVANCY